

The Washington Post

Paid parking at Rockville Library criticized

By Nesa Nourmohammadi
The Gazette
Thursday, May 6, 2010; GZ19

Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett's newest cost-cutting proposal is the latest chapter in the battle between county officials and Rockville Library patrons about whether visitors should have to pay for parking at the county-owned library.

Two weeks ago, Leggett (D) proposed charging for parking at the library as part of a budget adjustment for the current fiscal year, which ends in June, as well as fiscal 2011.

The reductions are needed to compensate for an additional \$196 million deficit in the coming fiscal year, which is largely the result of a \$168 million decrease in income tax revenue. The proposal is subject to the County Council's approval.

The county executive was faced with a \$779 million deficit when he proposed his fiscal 2011 budget several weeks ago.

In Rockville, library patrons are allowed free parking for two hours at the three, city-owned Town Square garages on North Washington Street, Route 355 and Maryland Avenue, for which the county reimburses the city. Ending the free parking could recoup the county

\$143,540 annually, officials said.

On weekdays, Rockville charges \$1 per hour to park at its Town Square garages until 6 p.m.

Leggett also recommended reinstating paid parking for the Bethesda Library, at 7400 Arlington Road, near the Bethesda Metro station. In Bethesda, library users park free at a county-owned lot near the library.

Charging patrons for parking there could net the county \$120,000 annually, officials said. Officials said they did not know how much they would charge patrons to park in the lot.

"We've had to make further budget adjustments," county spokesman Patrick K. Lacefield said of the April round of

Advertisement

ProFlowers MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL

Mom's Time to Shine, Your Time to

SAVE

100 Blooms for Mom

\$19.99 +s/h **FREE** Elegant Glass Vase

Offer ONLY available at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1.877.888.0688

Supplies are limited. Not valid with any other offer.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/05/AR2010050502798_pf.html

Print Powered By



The Washington Post

Paid parking at Rockville Library criticized

proposals. "Even though the county executive supports [free patron parking], we had to make some hard choices. We are in difficult fiscal times."

The County Council is scheduled to approve the budget May 27. If approved, the free parking would end when fiscal 2011 begins July 1.

Art Brodsky, chairman of the board that advises Leggett on issues related to Montgomery County Public Libraries, said Leggett's latest proposal does not bode well for an already-slashed libraries budget. He thinks that having to pay for parking could deter library visitors.

"That's just the tip of the iceberg," Brodsky said. "It's death by a thousand cuts."

Other library-related cuts proposed April 22 include the elimination of several positions and reductions in materials and other expenses, such as interpreting services for the deaf and hard of hearing.

"These are things you never get back," Brodsky said. "Once they get cut, it's hard to reinstate them."

Rockville Mayor Phyllis Marcuccio and City Council member Mark Pierzchala said the elimination of free parking for the library would have an adverse effect on the city.

"Of course I don't like it. It will have a negative impact on Town Square," Pierzchala said of the mixed-use development in the heart of the city. "We don't know who'll pay" for parking.

Advertisement

DON'T DELAY

Get Proven, Proactive
IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION

 **LifeLock.**
#1 In Identity Theft Protection™

Call Now 1-877-670-1746

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/05/AR2010050502798_pf.html

Print Powered By

